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November 10, 1962

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Suggested Policy Line for Cuban Crisis

Assumptions

Until we have received a definitive Soviet answer regarding the IL-28s and a reliable report as to the progress of the Mikoyan-Castro discussions, we must be ready to proceed on any one of four assumptions:

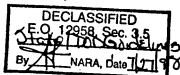
Assumption A. That the USSR will remove the IL-28s and will arrange adequate ground inspection.

If the removal of the bombers is sufficiently assured and the inspection arrangements adequate, we could presumably regard the incident as closed and give some form of guaranty regarding the invasion of Cuba. These arrangements would, of course, need to include more than a provision for Second-Phase inspection by the five Ambassadors. But even that limited progress might indicate a sufficiently forthcoming attitude to make possible some Third-Phase solution through a nuclear-free zone or otherwise.

Assumption B. That the USSR will arrange ground inspection, but will refuse to remove the IL-28s on the ground that these are Cuban property.

This seems rather unlikely. If the Cubans should agree to yield on the question of adequate ground inspection, (which means something more than mere Second-Phase arrangements for inspection by the five Ambassadors) then it is hardly likely that they would insist upon the retention of the IL-28s.

Assumption C. That the USSR will agree to withdraw the IL-28s, but will assert that they are unable to arrange ground inspection because of alleged Cuban objections.

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Assumption E. That the USSR will neither remove the IL-28s nor provide arrangements for ground inspection and continuing safeguards. Khrushchev will excuse his non-performance on the ground that Cuba is a sovereign country, the IL-28s belong to the Cubans, and Castro is unwilling to permit any form of ground inspection.

Under either assumption C or D we would be presented with a major choice of policy. Stated in large terms, two available lines of policy would seem worth consideration:

First, we might take the position that Cuba is effectively a puppet of the Soviet Union since it is economically dependent on Moscow; therefore, regardless of Cuban intransigence, we would continue to look to the Soviet Union to enforce the Kennedy-Khrushchev undertakings.

Or second, we might take at face value the Soviet assertion that Russia cannot control Castro. In that event we would tacitly or explicitly accept the fact or fiction (whichever it might be) that Khrushchev had complied to the extent of his ability and thereafter concentrate our pressure on Cuba. In that event, not only would we refuse to give any assurance of non-invasion, but we would make it clear that we could not tolerate--for reasons not only of our own security but of the security of the Hemisphere--that Castro be left in the possession of offensive weapons.

Advantages of Second Line of Policy

The second line of policy seems preferable from the point of view of the total American interest, for the following reasons:

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1. The shifting of the burden of responsibility would minimize the dangers of a direct confrontation with the USSR, which might escalate into a larger conflict.

2. It would assist Khrushchev in extricating the USSR from an involvement in Cuba which is proving progressively more costly and less profitable.

3. It would eliminate the Cuban question from the US-USSR dialogue and thus permit progress on other major issues.

4. It would provide freedom of action for the United States to deal with Castro directly, both on its own behalf and on behalf of the other American states.

Continuing Course of Action Regarding Cuba

If the United States should encourage the de facto disengagement of the USSR from its Cuban involvement and thus achieve a measure of freedom of action against Castro, the question would remain: What course of action should we then elect to follow?

Presumably that course of action should include the following elements:

(a) It should be consistent with our position that the United States cannot accept either the continuance of offensive weapons in Cuba or the absence of adequate safeguards against the introduction of new offensive weapons.

(b) It should be designed to undermine the authority and prestige of Castro, both in Cuba and in the eyes of the world.

(c) It

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(c) It should be directed towards setting in motion a train of events that would progressively enhance the American ability to deal decisively with Castro.

(d) It should involve the least possible direct challenge to the prestige or authority of Chairman Khrushchev and the USSR.

Available Options

Four possible courses of action would appear worthy of serious consideration:

1. Direct military action against Cuba.
2. Resumption of the quarantine on the basis of an expanded list.
3. Continued systematic aerial surveillance with the strong possibility of provoking interference that might lead to limited or general military action.
4. Solution through Security Council Arrangements.

I

DIRECT MILITARY ACTION

As contemplated in a paper prepared by the Department of Defense, direct military action would be taken against the IL-28s. Preparation for this action would consist of an announcement indicating the measures thusfar taken by the USSR to comply with the agreement but emphasizing that

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the United States would have to take necessary actions to eliminate the threat created by the bombers. The President would, however, be "prepared to ensure that these actions will not include an invasion of Cuba". The actions described in the Department of Defense memorandum are as follows:

"1. Issue a warning that action to remove the bomber threat is about to be taken, that the areas where these aircraft are located should be evacuated by all personnel, and that any attack on U.S. aircraft will be met with appropriate counter action.

"2. Conduct the air attack by selective and discriminate attack:

"a. At the present time it is estimated that such action within the next few days would require attacks (1) on San Julian Air Base with 16 F101 strike aircraft (includes local suppression aircraft) armed with Napalm, 2.75" rockets and 20mm ammunition, accompanied by 8 F-104/F8U aircraft equipped with GAR 8 missile to fly low level CAP, (2) on Holguin Air Base with 8A4D aircraft armed with napalm and Zuni rockets and 8F8U-2/F4H aircraft as CAP equipped with Sidewinder/Sparrow missiles and 20mm ammunition (with suppression provided by 8F8Us armed with Zuni rockets and 20mm).

"b. If the attack is delayed beyond the next 48 hours, dispersal of IL28s may require attack on additional airfields.

"3. In the absence of air counter action, the attack should be strictly confined to the destruction or serious damaging of the IL 28 aircraft by the most precise air attack means available. If there is air counter action, the suppression of this action by the assigned suppression aircraft would be required."

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Arguments for Direct Military Action

- (a) Such action would presumably be effective in eliminating the threat from these offensive aircraft;
- (b) It would be action consistent with our conduct of the Cuban affair, i.e., it would be "clear cut, forthright and have been fairly signaled in advance".
- (c) With its preponderant military strength the United States could promptly deal with any Cuban reaction.

Arguments against Direct Military Action

- (a) It would be regarded as a direct attack against Cuba and the Soviet Union might feel compelled to intervene on Cuba's behalf in order to save face; or react elsewhere.
- (b) In the absence of any direct Cuban attack on the United States or any other OAS country, world opinion might tend to regard the United States action as excessive--particularly in view of our own maintenance of bomber bases around the world and the disparity in size and resources between the United States and Cuba.
- (c) It might well provoke Cuban reaction against Guantanamo and possibly even against the Southeastern United States (presumably by MIGs).

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II

RESUMPTION OF QUARANTINE ON AN EXPANDED BASIS

The scenario for the reimposition of the quarantine is described in a Department of Defense memorandum as follows:

" (1) A public announcement should be made by the President, or other high government official, that:

a. Uncrating, assembling and readying of IL-28 jet bombers has continued.

b. The UN has been frustrated in its attempt to establish adequate inspection of incoming ships.

c. The UN has been frustrated in its attempts to establish adequate on-site inspections.

These aircraft with a combat radius of 740 miles remain a threat to the entire Caribbean, the northern portion of South America, Mexico, and the southern portion of the United States.

" (2) The United States will maintain the present quarantine until the bombers are removed and adequate on-site inspections, including appropriate long term agreements, are achieved. The United States supports the Brazilian Resolution and believes that it may offer an adequate long term solution, not only to the present crisis, but to future crises of this kind. If the Cubans fail to comply, the United States will have to consider taking additional steps.

" (3)

a. If no steps are taken to remove the bombers as a result of this statement, then the US should extend the quarantine to petroleum, reiterating our position that we will

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lift the quarantine if the bombers are removed and adequate inspection is permitted. The inclusion of petroleum under the quarantine would have immediate and sharp reflections within Cuba. Not only normal oil consumption, but nearly all electric power production in Cuba is dependent upon fuel oil. The Cubans are estimated to have 60 days supply of gas and diesel fuel oil, and approximately 110 days supply for power and industrial use. Sabotage could further reduce this stockpile if necessary. For this reason, it would seem very likely that if such a quarantine were established, compliance should be forthcoming shortly thereafter.

Arguments for Quarantine

(a) At the present time not only the OAS but the NATO countries strongly support our insistence on adequate inspection -- and, perhaps to a lesser extent on the removal of the IL-28's.

(b) The Soviet Union might be willing to withhold the further supply to Cuba of items on the proscribed list in order to reduce its investment in a rapidly wasting asset; for this reason it might secretly welcome a US blockade.

(c) The quarantine might result in the strangulation of the Castro regime without any direct loss of life.

(d) The imposition of a quarantine on shipments of POL would be directly relevant to the immobilization of the IL-28's.

(e) Even were the Soviet Union to run the blockade, the resulting confrontation could perhaps be restricted to sea warfare -- an arena in which we have a clear advantage. The danger of escalation might, therefore, be less than in the case of any form of bombing attack on Cuba which might result in bombing reprisals elsewhere.

Arguments Against Quarantine

(a) The renewed quarantine would be a direct challenge to the Soviet right of free sea transit. It would thus fail

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to meet one of the criteria listed earlier -- an action directly operating only on Cuba.

(b) Khrushchov yielded to the threat of our quarantine once by turning his ship around. He could not afford the humiliation of doing so a second time -- especially after the missiles have been removed and he has claimed to have complied fully with his undertakings.

(c) Khrushchev was willing to pull back his ships carrying sophisticated weapons to safeguard USSR technology. He would not have a similar motive for holding back tankers filled with POL.

(d) The USSR could not stand idly by while the economy of a Socialist state was slowly strangled; the loss of face and appearance of impotence would be too high a price for it to pay.

(e) The quarantine would be resented by several of our NATO friends, including the UK, which never acknowledged its legality. They acquiesced before because the limited quarantine did not affect their trade; they might well refuse to recognize a blockade which cut off valuable shipping of POL -- particularly since there is a fairly widespread feeling that we have already won our point by expelling the missiles.

III

ENFORCED AERIAL SURVEILLANCE

It is suggested that, instead of reimposing the blockade, we should undertake a systematic and unremitting air reconnaissance over Cuba, both high and low until such time as

(1) Castro yielded on inspection and the removal of the IL-28's;

(2) Castro was overthrown; or

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The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited

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The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited: An International Collection of Documents, from the Bay of Pigs to the Brink of Nuclear War

Published by: ProQuest Information and Learning, 300 North Zeeb Rd., PO Box 1346, Ann Arbor, MI 48106, USA

The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited: An International Collection of Documents, from the Bay of Pigs to the Brink of Nuclear War reproduces a comprehensive collection of records from the archives of the three key governments involved in the most dangerous confrontation of the Cold war. Declassified records from the United States, Russia and Cuba significantly advance analysis of the historical foundations of the missile crisis, the policy calculations and considerations of President John F. Kennedy and premiers Nikita Khrushchev and Fidel Castro, and the overt and covert military and paramilitary operations that combined to bring the world to the threshold of a nuclear exchange. Topics extensively covered in the documentation include the failed U.S.-led invasion at the Bay of Pigs, renewed attempts to overthrow Castro through Operation Mongoose and Operation Northwoods, U.S. military contingency planning for conflict with Cuba, naval warfare, Soviet and Cuban decision making and communications during the crisis, and the repercussions for U.S.-Soviet relations, and Soviet-Cuban relations in its aftermath. Materials were identified, obtained, assembled and indexed by the National Security Archive, a non-profit Washington D.C. based research institute and library. The microfiche collection is accompanied by a printed guide and index.

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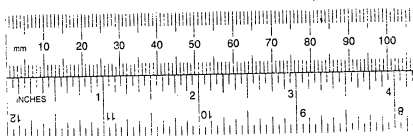
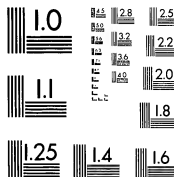
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- (3) The reconnaissance provoked an armed response that justified our taking direct military action enabling us, at least to eliminate the IL-28's.

Arguments for Reconnaissance

- (a) This course could be justified under the authority of QAS action.
- (b) It would be thoroughly consistent with our position that we could not tolerate a situation in which we neither had safeguards against the introduction of offensive weapons nor adequate observation to insure that offensive weapons presently in Cuban hands would not be used.
- (c) It would -- hopefully -- avoid direct confrontation with the USSR.
- (d) It would provide a means for imposing a constant public humiliation on Castro. No Government can permit national air space to be constantly invaded without demonstrating its weakness, both at home and abroad.
- (e) Castro could not continue for very long to stand down his planes and restrain his anti-aircraft fire without publicly acknowledging his own weakness. The result would be that sooner or later he would almost certainly attack our planes, which would permit an escalating scale of reprisal and counter-reprisal that could permit us to deal conclusively with the problem of Castro.

Arguments Against Reconnaissance Course of Action

- (a) Reconnaissance alone, without the supplement of a quarantine or on-the-ground inspection, would not provide adequate

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adequate security against the reintroduction of offensive weapons.

(b) Our response to Cuban interference with our reconnaissance would presumably take the form of bombing attacks against SAM sites, IL-28s, and other targets. This could not be accomplished without substantial loss of life--probably including the killing of Soviet technicians. This could produce unhappy reverberations in world opinion--particularly since some nations would regard our enforced reconnaissance as deliberate provocation for Cuban action.

(c) The Cuban response to our reconnaissance might be an attack on Florida cities, particularly if Castro felt the need to flex his muscles. More likely such an attack might occur after United States retaliatory action had been taken against Cuba, since even if we were to take out the SAM sites and IL-28s, the MIGs would still be capable of dropping iron bombs. (It might be noted that such attacks might also be launched by Castro if threatened with strangulation through a blockade.)

(d) The Soviets might feel compelled to react more strongly against United States' bombing of Cuba than against an expanded quarantine. Such reaction might well take the form of an air attack on Turkey or a move against Berlin or some other vulnerable point disadvantageous to us from the United States point of view. The possibility of escalation would be greater than in the case of sea warfare following a reimposed blockade.

IV

SOLUTION THROUGH SECURITY COUNCIL ARRANGEMENTS

This course of action is explained and recommended in the attached memorandum of Governor Stevenson.

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CONCLUSION

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CONCLUSION

The Problem of Choice

Direct action against Cuba on the basis suggested in Section I can probably be ruled out. Such a course of action would probably be regarded by world opinion as excessive, and it would involve grave risks of provoking retaliation elsewhere in the world.

Realistically, the choice would appear to be between an expanded quarantine, as recommended in Section II, or enforced surveillance, as recommended in Section III.

The decision between these alternative lines of policy turns in large part on a judgment as to the extent to which Khrushchev might in fact be prepared and able to disengage from Cuba. If, as a result of Castro's obduracy, he could cut his investment and leave Cuba without specific security commitments, he might be willing to turn his back while the United States took advantage of the opportunities provided by Castro's response to continued -- and necessarily harrassing -- low and high level surveillance.

On the other hand, if it is felt that Khrushchev could not sit idly by while we forceably eliminated the IL-28's and wiped out the SAM sites, the surveillance course might appear too dangerous.

On this assumption an expanded quarantine has much to recommend it. If the quarantine route is followed no military action need be taken directly against Cuba; therefore, Khrushchev would not be called upon to respond to what he must necessarily denounce as imperialist aggression. Under these circumstances Khrushchev might be prepared to see Cuba go down the drain through the slow strangulation of a blockade.

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But the vice of the blockade is that it directly engages the prestige of the USSR since it interferes with the freedom of movement of the Soviet merchant fleet. Khrushchev would have to denounce the United States for piracy -- as he has already done -- and for seeking to starve a small country whose only fault is its allegiance to Communism, and his supine acquiescence in that piracy would be read by all the world as a humiliating confession of impotence.

Against the background of these considerations, the questions for decision must include the following:

1. Would Khrushchev be ready to absorb the prestige loss of acquiescing in a reimposed quarantine or would he feel compelled to use his submarines against our naval vessels?

The existence of substantial doubt regarding the answer to this question suggests that before a quarantine were reimposed some effort might be made to sound out Soviet reactions.

2. If the quarantine did result in limited naval action, how would this affect other US-USSR relationships?

3. Even assuming that we encouraged Khrushchev to disengage from Cuba, if surveillance led to even limited bombing, could the Soviet Union afford to stand by while a nation was attacked that the USSR had vowed to defend? Might not the prestige costs be too great?

George W. Ball

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EXCISED COPY FOLLOWS

November 10, 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. McGeorge Bundy,
Special Assistant to the President

I am enclosing a memorandum that attempts to set forth the options open to us in the Cohen affair.

I apologize for the fact that in this case, as always, haste makes length.

I call your attention specifically to two points:

1. I have set out four courses of action as separate options without noting the fact that two or more might possibly be combined.
2. The fourth point of the memorandum embodies a proposal by Governor Stevenson. You may wish to call the President's attention specifically to this since Adlai mentioned yesterday that he hoped to have a chance to discuss his proposal with the President at Hyde Park today.

George W. Ball

(I have just noted on page 10 the arguments against aerial reconnaissance are omitted. This was a casualty of the typing shuffle--not intentional.)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CIDC/MB

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November 10, 1962

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Suggested Policy Line for Cuban Crisis

Assumptions

Until we have received a definitive Soviet answer regarding the IL-28s and a reliable report as to the progress of the Mikoyan-Castro discussions, we must be ready to proceed on any one of four assumptions:

Assumption A. That the USSR will remove the IL-28s and will arrange adequate ground inspection.

If the removal of the bombers is sufficiently assured and the inspection arrangements adequate, we could presumably regard the incident as closed and give some form of guaranty regarding the invasion of Cuba. These arrangements would, of course, need to include more than a provision for Second-Phase inspection by the five Ambassadors. But even that limited progress might indicate a sufficiently forthcoming attitude to make possible some Third-Phase solution through a nuclear-free zone or otherwise.

Assumption B. That the USSR will arrange ground inspection, but will refuse to remove the IL-28s on the ground that these are Cuban property.

rather unlikely. If the Cubans should agree to the question of adequate ground inspection, (which more than mere Second-Phase arrangements for the five Ambassadors) then it is hardly likely that they would insist upon the retention of the IL-28s.

Assumption C. That the USSR will agree to withdraw the IL-28s, but will assert that they are unable to arrange ground inspection because of alleged Cuban objections.

Assumption D.

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Assumption D. That the USSR will neither remove the IL-28s nor provide arrangements for ground inspection and continuing safeguards. Khrushchev will excuse his non-performance on the ground that Cuba is a sovereign country, the IL-28s belong to the Cubans, and Castro is unwilling to permit any form of ground inspection.

Under either assumption C or D we would be presented with a major choice of policy. Stated in large terms, two available lines of policy would seem worth consideration:

First, we might take the position that Cuba is effectively a puppet of the Soviet Union since it is economically dependent on Moscow; therefore, regardless of Cuban intransigence, we would continue to look to the Soviet Union to enforce the Kennedy-Khrushchev undertakings.

Or second, we might take at face value the Soviet assertion that Russia cannot control Castro. In that event we would tacitly or explicitly accept the fact or fiction (whichever it might be) that Khrushchev had complied to the extent of his ability and thereafter concentrate our pressure on Cuba. II

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Second Line of Policy

This second line of policy seems preferable from the point of view of the total American interest, for the following reasons:

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1. The shifting of the burden of responsibility would minimize the dangers of a direct confrontation with the USSR, which might escalate into a larger conflict.

2. It would assist Khrushchev in extricating the USSR from an involvement in Cuba which is proving progressively more costly and less profitable.

3. It would eliminate the Cuban question from the US-USSR dialogue and thus permit progress on other major issues.

Continuing Course of Action Regarding Cuba

If the United States should encourage the ~~de facto~~ disengagement of the USSR from its Cuban involvement

the question would remain: What course of action should we then elect to follow?

Presumably that course of action should include the following elements:

- (a) It should be consistent with our position that the United States cannot accept either the continuance of offensive weapons in Cuba or the absence of adequate safeguards against the introduction of new offensive

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(d) It should involve the least possible direct challenge to the prestige or authority of Chairman Khrushchev and the USSR.

Available Options

Four possible courses of action would appear worthy of serious consideration:

1. Direct military action against Cuba.
 2. Resumption of the quarantine on the basis of an extended list.
 3. Continued systematic aerial surveillance with the strong possibility of evoking interference that might lead to limited or general military action.
 4. Solution through Security Council Arrangements.
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I

DIRECT MILITARY ACTION

As indicated in a paper prepared by the Department, the least military action would be taken against Cuba. Cooperation for this action would consist of indicating the measures thus far taken by the USSR to comply with the agreement but emphasizing that

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the United States would have to take necessary actions to eliminate the threat created by the bombers. The President would, however, be "prepared to ensure that these actions will not include an invasion of Cuba". The actions described in the Department of Defense memorandum are as follows:

"1. Issue a warning that action to remove the bomber threat is about to be taken, that the areas where these aircraft are located should be evacuated by all personnel, and that any attack on U.S. aircraft will be met with appropriate counter action.

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In the absence of air counter action, the attack should be strictly confined to the destruction or disabling of the IL 28 aircraft by the most effective attack means available. If there is air counter action, the suppression of this action by the assigned suppression aircraft would be required."

Arguments

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Arguments for Direct Military Action

- (a) Such action would presumably be effective in eliminating the threat from these offensive aircraft;
- (b) It would be action consistent with our conduct of the Cuban affair, i.e., it would be "clear cut, forthright and have been fairly signaled in advance".
- (c) With its preponderant military strength the United States could promptly deal with any Cuban situation.

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- (c) It might well provoke Cuban reaction against the United States and possibly even against the Southeastern United States (presumably by MIGs).

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II

RESUMPTION OF QUARANTINE ON AN EXPANDED BASIS

The scenario for the reimposition of the quarantine as described in a Department of Defense memorandum as follows:

- " (1) A public announcement should be made by the President, or other high government official, that:
- a. Operating, assembling and readying of IL-28 jet bombers has continued.
 - b. The UN has been frustrated in its attempts to establish adequate inspection of incoming ships.
 - c. The UN has been frustrated in its attempts to establish adequate on-site inspections.

These aircraft with a combat radius of 740 miles remain a threat to the entire Caribbean, the northern portion of South America, Mexico, and the southern portion of the United States.

" (2) The United States will maintain the present quarantine until the bombers are removed and adequate on-site inspections, including appropriate long term agreements, are achieved. The United States supports the Brazilian Resolution and believes that it may offer an adequate long term solution, but in the present crisis, but to future crises of this kind, if the Cubans fail to comply, the United States will have to consider taking additional steps.

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(b) The Soviet Union might be willing to withhold the further supply to Cuba of items on the proscribed list in order to reduce its investment in a rapidly wasting asset; for this reason it might secretly welcome a US blockade.

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Even were the Soviet Union to run the blockade, the resulting confrontation could perhaps be restricted to the Caribbean -- an arena in which we have a clear advantage. The danger of escalation might, therefore, be less than in the case of any form of bombing attack on Cuba which might result in bombing reprisals elsewhere.

Arguments Against Quarantine

(a) The removal of quarantine would be a direct challenge to the Soviet right of free sea transit. It would thus fail

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the criteria listed earlier -- an action directly operating only on Cuba.

(b) Khrushchev yielded to the threat of our quarantine once by turning his ships around. He could not afford the humiliation of doing so a second time -- especially after the missiles have been removed and he has claimed to have complied fully with his undertakings.

(c) Khrushchev was willing to pull back his ships carrying sophisticated weapons to safeguard USSR technology. He would not have a similar motive for holding back tankers filled with FOL.

(d) The USSR could not stand idly by while the economy of a Socialist state was slowly strangled; the loss of face and appearance of impotence would be too high a price to pay.

(e) The quarantine would be resented by several of our NATO friends, including the UK, which never acknowledged its legality. They acquiesced before because the limited quarantine did not affect their trade; they might well refuse to recognize a blockade which cut off valuable shipping of FOL -- particularly since there is a fairly widespread feeling that we have already won our point by expelling the missiles.

III

ENFORCED AERIAL SURVEILLANCE

It is suggested that, instead of reimposing the blockade, we should undertake a systematic and unremitting air reconnaissance over Cuba, both high and low until such time as

- (1) Castro yielded on inspection and the removal of the IL-28's;

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- (3) The reconnaissance provoked an armed response that justified our taking direct military action enabling us, at least to eliminate the IL-28's.

Arguments for Reconnaissance

(a) This course could be justified under the authority of OAS action.

(b) It would be thoroughly consistent with our position that we could not tolerate a situation in which we neither had safeguards against the introduction of offensive weapons nor adequate observation to insure that offensive weapons in Cuban hands would not be used.

(c) It would -- hopefully -- avoid direct confrontation with the USSR.



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Reconnaissance as a Supplement to Reconnaissance Course of Action

(a) Reconnaissance alone, without the supplement of a quarantine or on-the-ground inspection, would not provide

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... security against the reintroduction of offensive weapons.

IV

... THROUGH SECURITY COUNCIL ARRANGEMENTS

This course of action is explained and recommended in the attached memorandum of Governor Stevenson.

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CONCLUSION

The Problem of Choice

Direct action against Cuba on the basis suggested in Section I can probably be ruled out. Such a course of action would probably be regarded by world opinion as excessive, and it would involve grave risks of provoking retaliation elsewhere in the world.

Realistically, the choice would appear to be between an expanded quarantine, as recommended in Section II, and forced surveillance, as recommended in Section III.

The decision between these alternative lines of action turns in large part on a judgment as to the extent to which Khrushchev might in fact be prepared and able to disengage from Cuba. If, as a result of Castro's obduracy, he could cut his investment and leave Cuba without specific security commitments, he might be willing to turn his back while the United States took advantage of the opportunities provided by Castro's response to continued -- and necessarily harassing -- low and high level surveillance.

On the other hand, if it is felt that Khrushchev could not sit idly by while we forcefully eliminated the IL-28's and wiped out the SAM sites, the surveillance course might appear too dangerous.

On the other hand, if an expanded quarantine has much to recommend it, and if the quarantine route is followed no military action would be taken directly against Cuba; therefore, the United States would not be called upon to respond to what he might be regarded as imperialist aggression.

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The main issue of the blockade is that it directly engages the sovereignty of the USSR since it interferes with the freedom of movement of the Soviet merchant fleet. Khrushchev would have to denounce the United States for piracy -- as he has already done -- and for seeking to starve a small country whose only fault is its allegiance to Communism, and his supine acquiescence in that piracy would be read by all the world as a humiliating confession of impotence.

Against the background of these considerations, the questions for decision must include the following:

1. Would Khrushchev be ready to absorb the practical loss of acquiescing in a reimposed quarantine or would he feel compelled to use his submarines against our naval vessels?

The existence of substantial doubt regarding the answer to this question suggests that before a quarantine were reimposed some effort might be made to sound out Soviet reactions.

2. If the quarantine did result in limited naval action, how would this affect other US-USSR relationships?

3. Even assuming that we encouraged Khrushchev to disengage from Cuba, if surveillance led to even limited bombing, could the Soviet Union afford to stand by while a nation was attacked that the USSR had vowed to defend? Might not the prestige costs be too great?

George W. Ball

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MEMORANDUM OF GOVERNOR STEVENSON
PROPOSING SOLUTION THROUGH SECURITY COUNCIL ARRANGEMENTS

I won't review the negotiations to date with which you are generally familiar.

Unless there is some break from Moscow or Havana--

I think the situation is deadlocked, and I suggest trying to conclude the transaction with the Russians to enable us to get into contact with Cuba through the Soviets directly. Realizing that the Soviets may not be able to control Cuba, I suggest consideration as a contingency of a formula for terminating the present transaction as follows:

1. If the Soviets will remove the IL-28 bombers and give us some means of verification (fuelages at sea) and formal assurance (in the Security Council) that all nuclear warheads for missiles and air nuclear bombs have been removed, and
2. If the Soviets will give us some means (through the five Latin countries having diplomatic relations, for example) verify compliance above on that point (I assume our reconnaissance will also verify without any agreement by the Soviets or Cubans), and

the Soviets and Cuba will give us a formal guarantee (in the Security Council) not to reintroduce nuclear weapons into Cuba,

the Soviets will call off the quarantine and give Cuba the formal guarantee (in the Security Council) against invasion and ask other Latin states to do likewise.

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The open question then would be: reciprocal guarantees by Cuba and other Latins and the United States against interference, subversion, sabotage, support for attacks, etc., together with some system of mutual verification by international inspection. This should be worked out through the OAS, if the other Latin states think it worthwhile.

Adlai E. Stevenson

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ENCLOSURE

November 10, 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR THE NSC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

I am enclosing, for your information and comment, a copy of a memorandum submitted to the President this morning which attempts to set forth the options open to us in the Cuban affair. The memorandum was hastily prepared at the request of the White House. It has been slightly revised since submission to the President.

It has been called to my attention that the memorandum creates the false impression that the optional courses of action mentioned are mutually exclusive. Obviously some combinations are possible and perhaps desirable.

George W. Ball

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED by WBS/Kowitz DATE 3/18/88
() RELEASE () DECLASSIFY
() EXTEND () DECLASSIFY IN PART
() DENY () Non-responsive info.
FOI, EO or PA exemptions (b)(1)
() CLASSIFY as _____ TS authority to: _____
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